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THIRD EDITION

equal franchise league

THE FAITH THAT IS IN US.

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Emmeline Pethick Lawrence.

PUBLISHED BY THE WOMAN'S PRESS, 4, CLEMENT'S INN,
STRAND, W.C.

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

VOTES FOR WOMEN.

National Women's Social and Political Union.

Offices : 4, Clement's Inn, Strand, London, W.C.
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Auditor : G. SAYERS, Chartered Accountant, 19, Hanover Square, W.

Publishing Office : The Woman's Press, 4, Clement's Inn, W.C.

Newspaper : VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Colours : Purple, White, and Green.

The Women's Social and Political Union are NOT asking for a vote for every woman, but simply that sex shall cease to be a disqualification for the franchise.

At present men who pay rates and taxes, who are owners, occupiers, lodgers, or have the service or university franchise, possess the Parliamentary vote. The Women's Social and Political Union claim that women who fulfil the same conditions shall also enjoy the franchise. It is estimated that when this claim has been conceded about a million-and-a-quarter women will possess the vote, in addition to the seven-and-a-half million men who are at present enfranchised.

The Women's Social and Political Union claim that a simple measure, giving the vote to women on these terms, shall be passed immediately.

CONSTITUTION.

Objects.—To secure for Women the Parliamentary Vote as it is or may be granted to men ; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

Methods.—The objects of the Union shall be promoted by—

1. Action entirely independent of all political parties.
2. Opposition to whatever Government is in power until such time as the franchise is granted.
3. Participation in Parliamentary Elections in opposition to the Government candidate and independently of all other candidates.
4. Vigorous agitation upon lines justified by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned.
5. The organising of women all over the country to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for political freedom.
6. Education of public opinion by all the usual methods such as public meetings, demonstrations, debates, distribution of literature, newspaper correspondence and deputations to public representatives.

Membership.—Women of all shades of political opinion who approve the objects and methods of the Union, and who are prepared to act independently of party, are eligible for membership. It must be clearly understood that no member of the Union shall support the candidate of any political party in Parliamentary elections until Women have obtained the Parliamentary Vote. The entrance fee is One Shilling.

THE FAITH THAT
IS IN US.

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MRS. PETHICK LAWRENCE.

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(A Verbatim Report of a Speech delivered at the Aldwych Theatre.)

It may be that there are many here for the first time who have been attracted perhaps by mere curiosity, perhaps by some deeper interest, because action or drama stirs a chord even in people who have never thought about a question like this at all. The fact that women go to prison, the fact that when they come out other women think it worth their while to prepare such a welcome for them as my fellow-members of the Women's Social and Political Union have given me, makes people think, makes them ask questions, and when they hear that there is to be a public meeting, they say to themselves, "I think I will go. I will see what those women have got to say for themselves. I will see if they can tell me anything that can explain this extraordinary action, if I can find out what it is that makes women, not in twos

and threes, but in their hundreds, endure a long term of imprisonment."

Cheap Martyrdom.

Now, did I hear somebody say in their hearts or under their breath, "Cheap martyrdom!"? That is what critics say sometimes, you know, that is how they explain it—"cheap martyrdom." Well, now, friends, let us look at this phrase. *Martyrdom*. I can assure you that the members of the Women's Social and Political Union have not given that name "Martyr" to themselves. We could never consider ourselves worthy of such a name as that! Our enemies have put this name upon us; we esteem it an honour—an honour of which we are not worthy. It is always our enemies who give us the best things, it is our enemies who have decided that we shall stand in the same list—along with Joan of Arc, who to-morrow is to be beatified by a great concourse of people in Rome; along with all the splendid, all the great, all those people who have been in advance of their time and have had to suffer for their convictions. They have put the right adjective to the word "Martyrdom" when they prefix the word "cheap." *Cheap!* A thing is cheap not because of its cost, but in relation to that which it is to purchase. If you buy a thing that is rubbish for a penny it is dear at the price. But the man who found the pearl of great price, when he went and sold everything that he had in order that he might buy it, thought it cheap. And so our martyrdom, friends, is cheap. Two months', three months', a year's imprisonment, two years', three years' imprisonment, if necessary—what would it be to buy that which we are going to achieve by it? Not the Vote only, mind you! Not the Vote only, but what the Vote means—the moral, the mental, economic, the spiritual enfranchisement of Womanhood; the release of woman, the repairing, the rebuilding of that great temple of womanhood, which has been so ruined and so defaced. Is not what they say true? *Cheap martyrdom!* Yes, it is cheap martyrdom.

Now, what is the good of going to prison? It would take me a very long time to explain the whole of the good, but one good in going to prison is that it teaches those who go there very much. It takes these things that we hear about—commonplace axioms, truths that we have heard since we have been children—and it burns them into us as living realities. Have you ever seen what they do with clay when they want to fashion the vessels? First of all, they mould the clay vessel. A touch will spoil it, a fall would ruin it. It is not ready for use. What do they do with it? They take it and they put it in the fire—into the oven—and when it comes out of the oven you have the perfect thing, finished and

ready for use. Friends, just what the oven is to the clay, that Holloway Prison is to the Suffragettes!

Let me give you an illustration. You have heard, until you are tired of it, until the phrase conveys no meaning to you, this principle enunciated: "Taxation and representation shall go together." Well, yes, you accept that. I have a birthday-book that was got out for a church bazaar. Mr. Asquith was asked to write his favourite quotation, with his signature. What is Mr. Asquith's favourite quotation? I was very interested to see it. "Taxation without representation is tyranny"! (Laughter.) I am very glad to hear that is Mr. Asquith's favourite quotation; but, you see, he is like a great many other people. What he thinks he believes, he denies by the action of his life.

What did the great Gladstone, whom Liberals believe in, and follow, and look up to, say on the subject? He said that taxation without representation is "legalised robbery." That was his opinion, and yet, after all these years, the Liberal Party, that profess to believe in him, continue to go on robbing women because they can do it legally. They go on robbing women, and if we protest about it they throw us into prison.

In Prison for Non-Payment of Rates.*

Let me show you how this Liberal principle was burnt into me in prison. One day I was asked if I wanted to go to the service in one of the wards. I was not allowed at that time to go to chapel, because I was in hospital. The chaplain called an old woman up to him, right in front of me. I had noticed this old woman; I was struck by her face. He called her to him, and the conversation I could not help overhearing.

"What is your name?" She told him.

"What is your age?"—"Seventy-six."

"Are you married or single?"—"Single, sir."

"What are you in prison for?"—"Debt, sir."

"Have you ever been in prison before?"—"No, sir."

"How much is it?"—"£3 16s."

"Rates, of course?"—"Yes, sir."

* The Tax Commissioners have power to commit to prison any person refusing or neglecting to pay his taxes when on his premises there are not sufficient goods on which to levy distress for this amount. With regard to rates, a magistrate may make an order for payment of rates. If this order is not carried out, and it is held that the defaulter has the means to pay the amount ordered to be paid, and has neglected or refused, the magistrate has power to commit a defaulter to prison for a term not exceeding six weeks.

“ How did it happen? ”—“ I keep a tenement lodging-house. It has been a very bad winter for my lodgers, and they were not able to pay me.”

This woman was good enough to pay rates—this old woman of seventy-six—and to go to prison when she could not meet the charge! And yet she was not accounted fit to exercise a vote. I saw her many times after that, with her wrinkled old face, sitting opposite to me, looking so puzzled, so patient, so humiliated. One day the chaplain came in, and she did not at once stand up, and I saw a young wardress—not roughly, not cruelly, but officially (there is a great difference, you know; I do not want to say one unkind word of anybody in Holloway Prison)—I saw that young wardress come up to that old woman and catch hold of her shoulder, and drag her up to her feet; and I saw the colour come over the old woman’s face, I saw the tears fill her eyes, she did not know where to look. Never in prison till she reached the age of seventy-six, and then because she could not pay £3 16s. for her rates! Now do you see what I mean by saying that what you see in prison burns a thing into you? That is it all along the line. Women are held responsible, women must fulfil the duties of citizenship, women must pay, women must be punished, but when it comes to exercising those rights and privileges which are supposed to go along with responsibility, then—well, these privileges don’t apply to women. Then the difference comes in; then we hear about this sex bar! No sex bar when it is a case of the tax-collector. No sex bar when it is the police-officer who comes with the summons to the police-court. Only the sex bar when there is a man to be returned to Parliament to represent the taxpayers and the ratepayers of the country.

Woman’s Place is the Home.

I will tell you another sentiment of which we women have often felt the keen irony. Our opponents say, “ Woman’s place is the home.” I shall not be able to tell you what I felt the first time I heard the cry of a little baby in Holloway Prison. I often heard that cry, and I used to look through the windows on the passage, and see the women at exercise. Among them was a woman carrying her little baby round and round the yard. Woman’s place is the home, but if she breaks the law she is taken from her home and sent to prison. Who talks, then, about her place being in the home? She can leave her home if she *breaks* the law, but she is not to leave her home to *make* the law. And it is not only women who break the law who have to leave their homes. There are women who have to leave their homes to go out to earn wages

because they have people dependent upon them. How about that? A woman who is a Suffragette, a member of another League, told me in prison (this was her third imprisonment), that at one time a nail from the boots that we have to wear pierced her foot and set up blood-poisoning, and the authorities, finding that they were going to have trouble, turned her out of prison. She was feeling very ill and very bewildered, there was nobody there to help her, for she had been turned out quite suddenly. And a young girl came along, and said: "Can I help you? Are you in trouble?" My friend told her what had happened, and she said, "I saw you come out of there. It is a dreadful place, isn't it?"

"How do you know?"

"Oh! I have been there."

"You! What did you go there for?"

"Stealing."

"Stealing! But you are not a thief." She looked the girl up and down; she could not believe her ears.

The girl said: "Well, I want to ask you what *you* would do. My husband deserted me, and left me with a little baby to look after, and my mother, who is old and sick, is absolutely dependent upon me. I go out to work; I only get 8s. a week, and sometimes I do not get that. What would *you* do if you had a little baby and a mother to provide for, and if you could not get work? Would you go on the streets, or would you steal?"

"Steal!" That is what my friend said. She looked the girl straight in the eyes, and she said, "I would steal; I would never go on the streets!"

The girl said to her: "Yes; and that is what I did."

What do I hear people say? "She could go to the workhouse." "Women's place is the home." And if no home is provided for them they can go to the workhouse. That is what they are fit for, and I can imagine the man who says it one who, like the man we read of in the paper this morning, makes a corner in wheat, and steals the food of the people, or one who in business would not hesitate for a moment to do a shady thing or a questionable thing, if it were within the limit of the law, in order that he may get an advantage, in order that he may make and amass a greater fortune than he has already.

Votes and Wages.

Yes, this question stares us in the face—the wages that our women workers are being paid. Friends, do you know how it works out? Do you know that, taking the high wages that women earn as teachers, as inspectors, or in various higher grades

of work, the average wage of women in this country is 7s. a week? Now what do our opponents say? They say: "What has the vote got to do with that?" They say that one of the most misleading things we assert is that here is any connection between the wages of women and the Vote. How carelessly they speak—how thoughtlessly!

Let us take the most obvious illustration. Who is the greatest employer of labour in the whole country? The Government. Does the Government employ women? Yes, thousands of women. Does it pay them, for the same work, what it pays men? No. What did Mr. Lloyd George say in the Albert Hall last December? He said that if women had the vote it would be absolutely impossible for the Government to maintain a double standard of wages. Here is an admission from a member of a hostile Liberal Cabinet, and yet, in the face of such a testimony, people say that the Vote has nothing to do with women's wages. Take, for instance, the wardresses in prison. The chaplain came up to me one day and said: "I have heard a good deal about you, Mrs. Lawrence. You have started holiday homes for young girls?" "Yes," I said. "Well," he said, "I wish you would start a holiday hotel for wardresses. You see they work very hard. They work twelve hours a day." (They talk about an eight hours' day for miners, but you don't hear about an eight hours' day for the women employed by the Government.) "Yes," I said, "I know they do." He said, "They very often break down, and they haven't enough money to go away for a holiday." I looked at him, surprised. To think that a Government servant should come to me—a voteless woman—and suggest that I should supply a deficiency because they did not pay their women servants enough! I thought to myself, what in the world will they ask women for next? I daresay you will find Liberal Members of Parliament thinking it was quite the right thing. It is no worse than expecting to have women canvassers doing all the dirty work to put men into Parliament, who, when they get into Parliament, not only withhold women's rights, but openly insult them with degrading taunts. Well, friends, the Government does not give equal pay for equal work, and Mr. Lloyd George has admitted—we need not go any further—that such a thing could not happen if women had the vote.

Then, don't you see that the Government sets the standard for the rest of the country? The Government is supposed to be the model employer. Last year there was a Co-operative Congress held in Lancashire and the question of the minimum wage was being discussed. Now a minimum wage is calculated upon the lowest level upon which a human being can actually exist, and keep himself in complete life—shelter, food, warmth—just the

absolute necessities of existence. And someone in that Congress got up and asked whether the minimum wage should be the same for women as for men. The chairman ruled the discussion of that question out of order by saying that the Government paid its men and women on a different scale, so, of course, the minimum wage would be different.

An Amusing Instance.

I read in the papers of a very amusing little instance that happened the other day, showing how the law has fixed the value of the women of this country. Three people came to give evidence—a man, a woman, and a boy. When the woman got out 2s. 6d. was given her for her fee. She found that the boy was paid 5s., and the man 7s. (Shame.) So she went back into the witness-box. (Women don't take these things as they used to do, you know—our movement is responsible for that.) She went back into the witness-box, and she asked why she had been given 2s. 6d. Now the magistrate tried exactly the same tactics that have been used from time immemorial against women demanding their rights. He tried to browbeat her, he tried to make her give in by saying all kinds of insulting, humiliating things. He tried to cover her with shame. The day has gone by for women to be beaten by ridicule or rudeness. She stood her ground, and at last she brought him one step further. "Well," he said, "as you are not a married woman I will give you 5s. Of course, if you were a married woman you would not have been able to make good your claim to more than 2s. 6d." I do not know why a married woman is supposed to be of less value than an unmarried woman! But the woman would have none of it. She said: "I don't want your 5s. It is not the money I care for, it is the justice; and if you won't give me a man's fee—my time is as valuable as that man's who has given evidence—you may keep your 5s.; I want none of it." So, you see, it has been determined by the law of the land where a woman stands. That is how she is valued by her nation. Now, friends, do you not think it is time that women had the Vote, in order to protest against this sort of thing?

But it is not only woman's status as regards wages—that is important enough; there are things perhaps even more important. I want to tell you something I heard the other day. A friend of mine, who lives out in Epping Forest, sent her little girl up to a High School in London. She travelled with two other little girls. These young girls found themselves followed by the same man day after day, who got into the carriage with them.

One day this man committed an act in their presence which is criminal. The children had the common-sense and the judgment, when they got to Liverpool Street, to go straight to the station-master and to tell him what had happened. The station-master told them to say nothing about it, to go to school, and to come back and take the same train home, and that it would be all right. They came back, they took the same train they always did. The man was waiting for them on the platform. He followed them, and he got into their carriage, and another man followed them, and he got into the carriage. The last man was a detective. The man was arrested and eventually sent to prison. The three children went up to the court to give their evidence, and each little girl went with her mother. When they came into the witness-box to be cross-examined, the *mothers were cleared out of the court*. They were not allowed—they, the natural protectors of these children—to remain in the court, and those children were questioned and cross-examined by men in the presence of men only.

The law as it affects women is a jumble! The woman is held responsible in many matters, in others she is treated as an irresponsible being. The law is very hard on her if she neglects her child; if she fails to do her duty, she has to go to prison, and very often for longer than the father, who is the only legal parent. In a police-court, only a little time ago, a magistrate gave an exemption order to a woman for vaccination. The clerk objected, but the magistrate was a man who had more common-sense than knowledge of the law. He said, "Pooh, pooh; nonsense! Of course, the woman is the parent of her child." And the authorities took the trouble to reverse the magistrate's decision; the husband had to lose a day's work and go up to the court because, forsooth, a mother is not the parent of her own child in the eyes of the law of this land!

Friends, I do not want to dwell upon this side of things. I do not want to dwell upon the grievances of women. It is inevitable that there should be grievances. We know perfectly well that the rights of the unrepresented cannot be understood, cannot be properly dealt with. I think if the women had had to make all the laws for the country the men might have been in the same plight as we are. We are all very human. I have told you these things because we are challenged to give these facts. I want to tell you this—that if there were no grievances to be redressed, if there were no hardships under which women specially suffered, if there were no bad wages and no trouble at all, it would not make the least bit of difference to our demand. Our demand rests upon the fundamental assumption that our enemies are so fond of quoting—you cannot make a man into a woman, or a woman into

a man. They are different, they have got a different point of view, they have got a different work to do in the world. Very well; that is exactly the reason why they should both be represented. Don't you see that? It is because women are different, it is because they are womanly, it is because women are women and men are men that we must have different representation.

You know, friends, some people are under the delusion that this movement is an anti-man movement that is making for severance between men and women. I tell you that the very contrary is the truth. The law of union between men and women is crying out for vindication. Men and women must live together, they must work out their future together. In the beginning, in the old stages of civilisation, men and women together made the home. They together carved out those rough steps by which civilisation has ascended higher and higher. The old law that prevailed in the simpler society must prevail in the more complex civilisation. Men cannot go out into other kingdoms and leave the women behind. Unless they go together no extension of freedom or life that they win can be assured to their children. The progress of the human race depends upon their being united, not separated as they are to-day.

Now I want to deal with one more critic. He is generally either a Liberal Member of Parliament or the candidate who wants to be one. It is the particular attitude of a man who wants to get into Parliament, or wants to stay there. This is what he says: "Oh, yes, of course, I believe that women ought to have the vote. Certainly. But I consider it a subject of very little importance compared with the questions that are now pressing for solution. What, after all, is the vote—a very poor thing—many men don't use their votes. The vote has not done what we hoped it would do; I do not think very much of the vote."

The Vote in South Africa.

Now let us see what the nation thinks of the vote. A few years ago we spent millions of money, we sacrificed thousands of lives. What for? "Equal rights for all whites." Because in a country thousands of miles away an obstinate old man wanted to make the disqualification for the franchise for the Uitlanders last longer, wanted to keep English settlers on a longer probation than we in this country thought either right or fair or just. So in order to get votes for men, we shed blood; we and they committed all kinds of violence; we and they spent millions of treasure. Perhaps some of you will say that was not the real reason. Well, that was the

ostensible reason, and you can't take in a nation with an ostensible reason that carries no conviction. That was the ostensible reason—"We seek no goldfields, no territory; all we want is equal justice for all whites." A man of very great authority said that, and the country did not hesitate to make that sacrifice. Again, during the course of that great war some of our fellow-citizens took up arms against the Crown. Now, that, from the point of view of the Government in power, was the most heinous, the most unforgivable sin. From the Government point of view these men had to be punished, and what did the Government decide was the adequate punishment for this disloyalty? They felt that five years' disfranchisement was a sufficient punishment for the rebels in order to mark their sense of the horror of their crime. And yet, friends, we women, we are to be disfranchised all our lives, and I do not know what crime we have committed, except that we were born women.

When I was in prison I read the Blue Book that has just been published on the Poor-Law Commission, and I find there that one thing that is dealt with very drastically by the majority and by the minority is this question of disfranchisement for those who seek relief. We read that this disability prevents those men who ought to have medical assistance, who really ought to lay their case before the Poor Law, from doing so. They are unwilling to pay the price. It is the "stigma and humiliation of political disability" that bars a man from going to the relieving officer to get relief when he or his wife or little children are ill. That is how they talk about the vote when it is a case of men.

We are told that the Government has no time to bring in a Votes for Women Bill. But they have time to bring in an Electoral Bill for London, which, we hear, is coming on next week, to deal with votes for men. Now is it not time we saw through this policy? Is it not time we said to Members of Parliament, "Be honest, talk about the vote when it is a case for women as you talk about the vote when it is a case for men. talk about the 'penalisation' of women, talk about 'the humiliation and the stigma' when women are shut out from the vote, talk as you do when men are shut out from it"?

The Militant Tactics.

Then we come to the very last objection. A great many people say, "Oh, yes, we agree with you; but where you go wrong, where we do not agree with you is in your militant tactics." Now, friends, I simply cannot understand such an attitude as that. I find it easier to understand the attitude of the man or the woman

who says that he or she does not believe in the vote than to understand the attitude of those who say that they believe in it, but that those who are prepared to fight for their convictions are wrong. Perhaps I should understand that attitude if the objectors were against all forms of militant action, if they did not believe in war, if they believed that under no circumstances was it right for soldiers to defend their country, under no circumstances was it right to do violence, either by way of justice or retribution. Then their attitude would be logical; but why they believe that it is right for soldiers to fight for the defence of their country even though they do so at the cost of destruction and bloodshed, and yet believe it is wrong for us to fight for the defence of our freedom and dignity, although we in our warfare do no violence either to life or to property, I cannot understand.

Sometimes they say, "Oh, but it is all so sordid. You are not fighting with the Government, you are just fighting with the police." But don't you see that all war is like that? When our soldiers are sent to fight, they do not fight with the kings, the rulers; they fight with the common soldiers. When we went out to fight those people in South Africa, we fought with peasants, we fought with farm hands, and labourers. War is not dignified, war is not a pageant, war is not pleasant. When you put on your new uniform, when you ride in all your splendour, why then you are having a field day; that is what we had to-day in our procession. But when soldiers go forth to fight, do you think they are not dirty and muddy and begrimed? Do you think that they are fit to have their photographs taken? War is horrible—it is dirty, it is squalid, it is miserable, and it is only dignified because there is a great ideal behind it. Well, that is the case with our war. The police are the soldiers sent out to oppose women. We have to meet them when we go forth on a deputation to the Prime Minister to lay before him the claim of women taxpayers to representation. They are sent by those behind, who are the real enemy. We have to maintain our right to petition against injustice, against the coercion put in force against us to turn us back. We are there because we have a duty to perform, just like the soldiers, who fight for their nation and honour.

The people who criticise our militant action, are they absolutely ignorant of all history? Don't they know that every great political reform and every great enfranchisement of the people has depended for its success upon its fighting policy? Have they never read of the days of King John, when the Barons came to the king and at the point of the sword forced him to put his signature to Magna Charta? Do they not know that in 1832 when the great Reform Bill was passed, the reason given by the Government to the House of Commons for passing it, was that it

would be otherwise impossible to keep peace in this country? Have they never read of the patriot Garibaldi, who raised his country from the very ashes of the grave to be a living nation among the nations? Don't they remember how Mazzini preached three things—Education, Organisation, but, above all, Militant Agitation? And it is the same to-day. I do not say education ought not to have come first. It did. For forty years education has been going on—too long! Militant agitation ought to have come before. I will tell you when it ought to have come. It was quite right that this movement should confine itself to education at the beginning; it was right that it should have great meetings that it should organise great petitions, that it should do everything it could to make its principles known amongst the people, that it should go to individual Members of Parliament, that it should win the pledges of Members of Parliament to support a Bill in the House of Commons. That was quite right; but when, in 1884, these promises deliberately made, and pledges deliberately given, were deliberately broken; when the Suffragists who had trusted in the Government found themselves deliberately betrayed, then, in 1884, they ought, seeing that other things had failed, to have had resort to a fighting policy. They preferred to yield, they preferred to submit, and the agitation which was entrusted to the hands of those representatives died. I tell you this, friends, and I say it very seriously, the representatives of the women's movement in the year 1884, whether intentionally or unintentionally—I think unintentionally—betrayed the women's movement, were traitors to it. It is to them that we owe this battle that we have got to fight now. You understand—men understand it, and you women understand it—in politics it never does to admit that you have fired the last shot in your locker. If you give in, well then nobody is going to take any notice of you. The militant agitation has been too long delayed. Let us be thankful that we have found out the secret now of successful action.

But, friends, it is not only tactically right, it is not only the very best, in fact the *only* tactics, but if there was no chance of the militant agitation being successful, even then to fight would be morally right; it would be the only self-respecting, the only dignified, the only right course to take. I do not say for one moment that these tactics are justified by success; I do not take that line at all. I say, whether they were successful or whether they were not successful, I and the many women and men with me would rather stand and fight for our freedom—yes, and die for it—than we would bow our necks to consent to dishonour. I pity those poor souls who have so little sense of honour that they want life and peace at any price. Life without honour is not worth anything at all, and if we could not

fight for our honour, success or no success, then I say we are not fully evolved human beings. Do not make any mistake about it—the militant agitation is tactically right, but above and beyond and deeper than that it is morally right. Friends, those who have died fighting for freedom without success are the noblest names on our roll-call of history. What should we have done without them? Movements do not always succeed, not at the time. We have only to think of Joan of Arc again. How she was put to death as a criminal, and for many years the stigma of the criminal's execution was upon her and her family, and now to-day, the Church is making her a saint. She had to wait 400 years for her justification. Don't you see that if you are fighting for the right thing, and if you don't succeed, it is as when they plough back the harvest into the soil in order to enrich it for the harvests to come? It is those who fight in the present who enrich the future.

We are the Reapers.

But we in this movement are not like that, for we are the reapers. I say that our tactics are not *justified* by success, yet I claim for them the most wonderful and unmistakable success that for many years has distinguished a movement. Why is that, friends? It is because the fulness of time has arrived, and every sign is here to show us that the fulness of time has arrived. We are not here to sow; we come as the reapers to gather the harvest, and this movement is the outcome of the thoughts that have been going on in the hearts of women for generation after generation, and are going on in the hearts of women to-day all the world over. That is why we see success. Who would have thought—I should never have thought for one moment four or five years ago—that the women of the upper and middle classes would lay aside their traditions, would lay aside those things which seemed their very life, would lay aside their luxuries, their comforts, would put behind them public opinion and reputation, and would go in that long procession through those gates of Holloway Gaol to experience the same life that is thought the necessary discipline for the criminals and for the outcasts of society.

This is indeed an amazing sign of the times. It means that a great force is at work, a force uncalculated and irresistible. Its effect cannot be stayed. The field of humanity is whitening again to harvest. But the reapers are few.

This movement calls to every woman to-day whose soul is alive. It calls for your service. It calls for your self. You are needed; urgently needed. Give your life to it and you shall find your life

a thing of undreamed-of significance and value. If you have been stirred to interest to-day—you who have hitherto remained untouched by this wonderful awakening—do not let another day go by, but throw in your lot with us now. Write at once to the Honorary Secretary, of 4, Clement's Inn, and ask her to send you more information about the movement. Ask her to send you a membership card. Enrol yourself in our ranks. Take part in the work, step in to relieve those who have been doing your business all the time when you were asleep to your responsibility. Come and help to arouse the electors at the by-elections. Enter with heart and soul into every scheme of our organisation for bringing this gospel of Votes for Women to the people.

Make up your mind that you will be found on the next deputation that goes to Mr. Asquith. Submit yourself to the result if the Prime Minister refuses to receive you and orders your arrest and imprisonment. Why should you refuse imprisonment as a test of your faith when hundreds of women have already accepted it? They have led the way. There are hundreds more in this hall who could follow. Let everyone ask herself, "Why not I?" What prevents you? Are you thinking of domestic ties? Do you then imagine that the women who have been in prison had no domestic ties? Are you thinking of your husband, your children, your mother, or others whose lives are bound up in yours? Do you think that the women who have gone to prison had no bonds of this kind? Do you think it was easier for them to break these bonds than it is for you?

There are very few things—there are some things, but very few things—that can serve as an excuse to keep you out of the battle now. The way has been made easy; the greatest part of the price has been paid. The least thing you can do is to come forward now and bear your part in the great work of emancipating the womanhood of your country.

EMMELINE PETHICK LAWRENCE.

ON SALE by the National Women's Social and Political Union, at their Central Office, 4, Clement's Inn, London, W.C., and of Local Secretaries.

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Printed by Garden City Press Limited, Letchworth, Herts.—11447.